



Palawa Magazine as a Platform for Advocating for Victims of the 1965 Tragedy by Sekber'65 Surakarta

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Abstract: The 1965 Tragedy left survivors facing prolonged discrimination and limited opportunities to voice their experiences, aspirations, and demands. In this context, Palawa Magazine emerged as a community-based publication that sought to advocate for victims and preserve their collective memory. This study aims to analyze the background of the publication of Palawa Magazine by the Surakarta Joint Secretariat '65 (Sekber '65) and to examine its role as a medium of advocacy for the victims of the 1965 Tragedy. This study employs a historical method encompassing heuristics, source verification, interpretation, and historiography to reconstruct and interpret the publication of Palawa Magazine as an advocacy medium for the victims of the 1965 Tragedy. The findings reveal that Palawa Magazine was published in response to the limited space available for victims of the 1965 Tragedy to express their experiences, aspirations, and demands. As an advocacy medium, the magazine functions as a communication platform for survivors and the wider public, an educational resource on history and human rights, a means of shaping collective memory, and a medium advocating for recognition, the restoration of rights, and reconciliation for the victims of the 1965 Tragedy. Through its various sections and news coverage, Palawa Magazine contributes to raising public awareness of the importance of addressing past human rights violations and preserving the collective memory of the 1965 Tragedy. In conclusion, Palawa Magazine functioned not only as a medium for disseminating information but also as an advocacy instrument that amplified survivors' voices, strengthened collective memory, promoted public history, and encouraged a more inclusive dialogue on justice and the resolution of past human rights violations in Indonesia.

Keywords: collective memory; community media; human rights advocacy; Palawa Magazine; the 1965 tragedy

Abstrak: Tragedi 1965 menyebabkan para penyintas mengalami diskriminasi berkepanjangan serta keterbatasan ruang untuk menyampaikan pengalaman, aspirasi, dan tuntutan mereka. Dalam konteks tersebut, Majalah Palawa hadir sebagai media komunitas yang berupaya mengadvokasi korban sekaligus menjaga memori kolektif mereka. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis latar belakang penerbitan Majalah Palawa oleh Sekretariat Bersama '65 (Sekber '65) Surakarta serta mengkaji perannya sebagai media advokasi bagi korban Tragedi 1965. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode sejarah yang meliputi heuristik, verifikasi sumber, interpretasi, dan historiografi, untuk merekonstruksi dan menafsirkan penerbitan Majalah Palawa sebagai media advokasi bagi korban Tragedi 1965. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Majalah Palawa diterbitkan sebagai respons terhadap terbatasnya ruang bagi korban Tragedi 1965 untuk menyampaikan pengalaman, aspirasi, dan tuntutan mereka. Sebagai media advokasi, majalah ini berfungsi sebagai sarana komunikasi bagi para penyintas dan masyarakat luas, media edukasi mengenai sejarah dan hak asasi manusia, pembentuk memori kolektif, serta media yang memperjuangkan pengakuan, pemulihan hak, dan rekonsiliasi bagi korban Tragedi 1965. Melalui berbagai rubrik dan pemberitaannya, Majalah Palawa berkontribusi dalam

meningkatkan kesadaran publik mengenai pentingnya penyelesaian pelanggaran hak asasi manusia masa lalu serta pelestarian memori kolektif Tragedi 1965. Dengan demikian, Majalah Palawa tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai media penyebaran informasi, tetapi juga sebagai instrumen advokasi yang memperkuat suara para penyintas, memperkuat memori kolektif, mengembangkan sejarah publik, serta mendorong dialog yang lebih inklusif mengenai keadilan dan penyelesaian pelanggaran hak asasi manusia masa lalu di Indonesia.

Kata Kunci: advokasi hak asasi manusia; Majalah Palawa; media komunitas; memori kolektif; tragedi 1965



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Introduction

The mass killings of 1965–1968 were one of the most significant episodes of violence in 20th-century Indonesian history. Melvin and Pohlman note that these events constituted one of the largest episodes of mass violence of their time (Melvin & Pohlman, 2018). This violence was not a spontaneous outburst but rather part of a systematic campaign to destroy the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) and individuals suspected of having ties to it (Melvin & Pohlman, 2018). In line with this, Cribb asserts that following the events of September 30, 1965, hundreds of thousands of people were killed across various regions of Indonesia (Cribb, 1990). These mass killings took place primarily in Central Java, East Java, Bali, and North Sumatra through arrests, detention without due process, torture, and killings involving military personnel alongside civilian groups (Wardaya, 2008).

The impact of the 1965 Tragedy did not end with the loss of the victims' lives but continued in the form of human rights violations that persisted for decades. In addition to experiencing murder, detention, torture, exile, the confiscation of property, and job loss, the victims and their families also faced social stigma and institutionalized discrimination through various state policies during the New Order era (KontraS, 2016). Hakim (2020) explains that these policies included, among other things, the marking of victims' identities with special labels, restrictions on access to certain jobs, and social exclusion. The state's failure to uncover the truth and restore the victims' rights has allowed this stigma and discriminatory treatment to persist to this day. This situation demonstrates that stigma against victims is not only shaped by state policies but is also perpetuated in the collective memory of society, thereby continuing to influence the social lives of survivors even after the end of the New Order regime (Atmaja, 2019).

The persistence of this stigma indicates that the 1965 violence not only left physical scars but also gave rise to structural violence that limits victims' access to civil, social, and political rights. In the context of transitional justice, this situation reveals that the four main pillars of addressing human rights violations—truth-telling, the administration of justice, reparations for victims, and guarantees of non-repetition—have not yet been fulfilled. As a result, various victim communities have developed forms of independent advocacy as an effort to preserve collective memory while also fighting for state recognition of the experiences they have endured (Rohman & Pitaloka, 2020).

The unresolved nature of the 1965 gross human rights violations has spurred the emergence of various civil society initiatives to fight for the rights of victims. One such initiative is the 1965 Joint Secretariat (Sekber '65) in Surakarta, established in 2005 as a platform for consolidation and an advocacy organization for survivors of the 1965 Tragedy. In addition to providing support and advocating for the restoration of victims' rights, Sekber '65

has developed advocacy strategies based on documentation and publication as part of the struggle to preserve collective memory. McGregor and Pohlman (2013) explain that victims' organizations utilize reports, testimonies, and various forms of publication to challenge the state's official narrative while building solidarity among victims. This finding is reinforced by Leksana and Subekti (2023), who show that documenting victims' experiences and passing on narratives across generations are crucial to preserving the collective memory of the 1965 Tragedy amid the unresolved human rights violations.

The publication strategy implemented by Sekber '65 Surakarta is part of the advocacy practices commonly carried out by civil society organizations. Media independently managed by communities are utilized not only as a means of disseminating information, but also as a space for participation, for representing the experiences of marginalized groups, and for conveying alternative narratives that rarely find a voice in mainstream media (Astuti & Irwansyah, 2022). In this context, the publication of Palawa Magazine serves as one example of how community media is utilized to support the struggle of the victims of the 1965 Tragedy through the documentation of experiences, the dissemination of information, and advocacy.

One form of publication-based advocacy carried out by Sekber '65 Surakarta is the publication of Palawa Magazine. For this organization, Palawa Magazine serves not only as a medium for internal communication but also as a space for documenting survivors' experiences, presenting alternative narratives regarding the 1965 Tragedy, and as a means of voicing demands for recognition, rehabilitation, and the restoration of victims' rights. Through articles, testimonies, and various writings published within its pages, this magazine strives to preserve the collective memory of the 1965 Tragedy while simultaneously giving voice to the victims who have been silenced for decades.

Studies on advocacy for victims of the 1965 Tragedy have been examined from a range of perspectives. Saputro (2024) shows that the Sekber '65 Surakarta coalition uses ketoprak performance art as a medium to convey victims' experiences to the public, while Nurani (2026) examines how members of the same coalition reconstruct their selfhood through narrative practices—drawing on Paul Ricoeur's concepts of narrative identity and threefold mimesis—based on interviews and documentation that include the community's own writings and magazines. In the realm of mass media, Ikhwan et al. (2019) explain that digital media serves as a space for contesting narratives about the 1965 Tragedy through the circulation of alternative perspectives, and Wijayanti (2024), through a Gamson-model framing analysis of the online outlet 1965 Setiap Hari, shows how such coverage contributes to reconstructing survivors' collective memory. Beyond Java, Patra et al. (2021), using a social memory approach, show that former political prisoners in West Sumatra who joined YPKP (Institute for Research on the Victims of 1965/66) are motivated to produce their own memories of the mass violence and detention they experienced in their pursuit of justice. Nevertheless, none of these studies has examined community print media as an advocacy tool produced and managed directly by victims' organizations themselves.

In fact, media published by victims' communities not only serve as a means of disseminating information but also function as a space for articulating experiences, shaping collective memory, and passing down intergenerational remembrance of past violence (Leksana & Subekti, 2023). This gap points to the urgency of examining community print media as an advocacy tool that has so far been overlooked, even though it is produced directly by victims and therefore carries their voice without mediation by external actors or institutions. Therefore, this study offers a novel approach by focusing on Palawa Magazine as the subject of analysis to understand how community print media is utilized as an advocacy tool by the '65 Surakarta Joint Secretariat.

To analyze this gap, this study draws on alternative media theory (Atton) and collective memory theory (Halbwachs; Assmann) as its analytical framework. Alternative media theory is used to examine how Palawa Magazine, as a community-produced publication, positions itself against the limited space available to victims in mainstream narratives, while collective memory theory is used to understand how the magazine articulates victims' experiences and passes down remembrance of the 1965 Tragedy across generations.

Based on this, this study aims to analyze the background of the publication of Palawa Magazine by Sekber '65 Surakarta and to examine its role as an advocacy medium for the victims of the 1965 Tragedy. This study is expected to enrich scholarly discussion on the relationship between media, advocacy, and the struggle for memory in the context of addressing gross human rights violations in Indonesia, while also contributing empirical material on community-produced print media that remains underexplored compared to digital media, performance art, and oral narrative.

Research Methods

This study employs historical method as its primary approach, in line with the social history perspective used to analyze the role of Palawa Magazine as an advocacy medium representing the experiences, aspirations, and struggles of the victims of the 1965 Tragedy. Historical method was chosen because the object of this study must be reconstructed from primary sources produced or experienced directly by the actors involved, rather than merely described as a bounded case. Following Kuntowijoyo (1995), this study applies four stages of historical method: heuristics, verification, interpretation, and historiography.

At the heuristic stage, primary sources were collected in the form of the archives of Palawa Magazine and oral testimony obtained through in-depth interviews with the administrators of Sekber '65 Surakarta and the editor-in-chief of Palawa Magazine, functioning as oral history sources. These interviews were directed at informants with direct knowledge of and involvement in the publication of Palawa Magazine, namely Sekber '65 Surakarta executives and members who understood the organization's history and advocacy activities, as well as the editor-in-chief of Palawa Magazine. Secondary sources were obtained from books, scholarly articles, previous research findings, and other documents relevant to the 1965 Tragedy, advocacy media, and the history of Sekber '65 Surakarta.

At the verification stage, the collected sources were examined for their authenticity and credibility by comparing information obtained from different informants and cross-checking interview results against the documentary sources. At the interpretation stage, the verified facts were analyzed and connected using the media-function and media-memory perspectives outlined in the Introduction, in order to explain the background of Palawa Magazine's publication and its role as an advocacy medium for the victims of the 1965 Tragedy. At the historiography stage, the findings were compiled into a systematic narrative presented in the following sections, describing the background of Palawa Magazine's publication and its role in advocating for the victims of the 1965 Tragedy.

Research Result

Background of the Publication of Palawa Magazine by the 1965 Joint Secretariat (Sekber '65) Surakarta

The research findings indicate that the publication of *Palawa* Magazine was not solely motivated by the Joint Secretariat 1965 (Sekber '65) Surakarta's need for an organizational publication medium, but rather served as a response to the social conditions faced by victims of the 1965 Tragedy, who continue to experience trauma, stigma, and limited access to

information. For Sekber '65 Surakarta, the existence of this media outlet was viewed as part of an effort to rebuild a space for communication among survivors who had endured years of marginalization in social life. Therefore, the launch of *Palawa* Magazine cannot be understood merely as an organizational product, but rather as the result of a historical process influenced by the victims' circumstances, the role of the founding actors, and the institutional support that made its publication possible.

The social conditions of the victims of the 1965 Tragedy were the main factor that led to the idea of publishing *Palawa* Magazine. Based on interviews with the coordinator of the Surakarta '65 Joint Secretariat, most victims still live in the shadow of their experiences as political prisoners and the various forms of discrimination they faced after the events of 1965. This trauma has caused many victims to be reluctant to share their life stories for fear of being stigmatized by society once again.

"At that time, many victims were still afraid to speak out. They felt that sharing their past experiences would lead to being stigmatized again. That's why we thought there needed to be a platform where they could share their stories more safely" (Interview with Winarso, May 20, 2026).

These findings indicate that the challenges faced by survivors are not only related to meeting economic needs but also involve the loss of a space to openly share their life experiences. Long-term trauma creates a mechanism of social silencing, leading many survivors to keep their experiences private. This situation has led to narratives about the 1965 Tragedy being largely shaped by parties outside the victim community, while opportunities for survivors to share their own experiences remain relatively limited. In such circumstances, the need for a communication medium becomes crucial, as the media is seen as capable of providing a safer space for survivors to share their experiences, rebuild their self-confidence, and strengthen social bonds among fellow survivors.

In addition to being influenced by the victims' circumstances, the research findings also indicate that the launch of *Palawa* Magazine cannot be separated from the role of the individual who conceived the idea. Based on an interview with the Editor-in-Chief of *Palawa* Magazine, the idea to publish a community-based media outlet stemmed from his professional experience as a journalist. This background shaped the view that media serves a broader function than merely conveying information—namely, as a means of communication, documentation, and advocacy for marginalized communities. This journalistic experience was subsequently adapted into the activities of the Surakarta '65 Joint Secretariat as a strategy to foster communication between the victims of the 1965 Tragedy and the broader public.

This finding demonstrates that the process leading to the creation of *Palawa* Magazine was influenced not only by the organization's needs but also by the capabilities of the actors involved. In historical studies, individual *agency* is a key factor in explaining how an idea evolves into collective action. In this context, the journalistic experience of *Palawa* Magazine's founders contributed to the development of an advocacy strategy that utilized print media as its primary instrument. Thus, the publication of *Palawa* was the result of an interaction between the social needs of the victims and the initiative of individuals capable of translating those needs into a form of media communication.

This idea then gained the opportunity to be realized through external support. Based on interview findings, at the time of its establishment, the Sekber '65 Surakarta organization already had legal standing but lacked sufficient funding to carry out its various programs. Through the networks of the organization's leadership, Sekber '65 Surakarta subsequently established communication with Indonesia for Humanity (IKa) and secured the opportunity to

participate in the Peduli Program. After undergoing a selection process, Sekber '65 Surakarta received funding support, which was then used to implement various victim empowerment programs in accordance with the organization's mandate, including the publication of *Palawa Magazine*.

Thus, the launch of *Palawa Magazine* was influenced not only by the organization's internal needs and the social conditions of the victims but also by institutional support that made it possible to bring this idea to fruition. Support from the Peduli Program not only provided financial resources for the magazine's publication but also expanded Sekber '65 Surakarta's scope of action in developing advocacy strategies focused on the victims' social recovery. This finding indicates that the publication of community media is the result of a convergence between the needs of civil society and support from institutions concerned with human rights issues, thereby enabling advocacy practices to be carried out in a more structured and sustainable manner.

The smooth publication of *Palawa Magazine* is also inextricably linked to considerations regarding the characteristics of the community that serves as the media's primary target audience. Based on interview results, the majority of Sekber '65 Surakarta members are elderly survivors of the 1965 Tragedy. In addition to facing various health issues and economic constraints, they also have limited access to advancements in information technology. Most survivors are not yet accustomed to using smartphones or digital media as sources of information. Nevertheless, they are highly motivated to continue learning and staying informed about developments in the struggle for the rights of the victims of the 1965 Tragedy. These circumstances led Sekber '65 Surakarta to choose print media as the communication medium deemed most suitable for the needs and capabilities of the survivors.

This finding indicates that the choice of a magazine format is not merely a technical publishing issue but rather part of the organization's communication strategy. Unlike digital media, which requires electronic devices and digital literacy skills, print media is more accessible to survivors because it can be read immediately, saved, and revisited as needed. Thus, the choice of print media reflects the Sekber '65 Surakarta's effort to tailor its advocacy approach to the characteristics of the community it serves. This strategy demonstrates that a medium's effectiveness is determined not only by technological advancements but also by its suitability to the social conditions, age, and needs of its readers.

In addition to considering ease of access, the publication of *Palawa Magazine* is also based on the desire to build a sustainable space for communication among the victims. According to an interview with the Editor-in-Chief of *Palawa Magazine*, this medium is designed not only to convey information about the organization's activities but also to serve as a platform for sharing experiences, broadening perspectives, and providing accurate information about the victims of the 1965 Tragedy to the public.

"This magazine was not created solely for Sekber members. We want the public to also understand what life is really like for the victims. So the magazine's function is not just to provide information, but also to advocate for them." (Interview with Ms. Didik, May 26, 2026).

This statement shows that from the very beginning, *Palawa Magazine* was positioned as a medium with two target audiences: the community of victims and the general public. For the survivors, the magazine serves as a communication medium that strengthens bonds among victims, expands access to information, and helps rebuild self-confidence after years of living with stigma. Meanwhile, for the general public, *Palawa* serves as a platform to present the

survivors' perspectives on the 1965 Tragedy, enabling the public to access information directly from the survivors' experiences, rather than solely from narratives constructed by other parties.

This function is further evident through the involvement of survivors as writers in *Palawa Magazine*. According to research findings, survivors are not merely the subjects of news coverage but are also given the opportunity to write about their own experiences, perspectives, and reflections on the events of 1965 and their lives afterward. This opportunity provides a space for victims to represent their identities and life experiences independently. Thus, *Palawa Magazine* serves not only as a medium for disseminating information but also as a space for representation that enables a long-marginalized group to voice their perspectives directly. "In *Palawa*, the victims can write about their own experiences. Until now, stories about 1965 have mostly been written by others, even though the victims also want to share what they went through" (Interview with Mrs. Didik, May 26, 2026).

This finding indicates that the publication of *Palawa Magazine* represents an effort to restore the victims' position as subjects in the writing of history. For decades, the experiences of the victims of the 1965 Tragedy have more often been represented through narratives constructed by the state, the media, or researchers. The existence of *Palawa* opens a space for survivors to construct narratives based on their own life experiences. From a public history perspective, this practice demonstrates that the production of historical knowledge does not occur solely within academic circles or state institutions but can also be carried out by community groups through media they manage themselves. Therefore, *Palawa* functions not only as a community communication medium but also as a means of documenting the victims' experiences and as part of the effort to build a collective memory of the 1965 Tragedy (Amboro, 2020).

The existence of *Palawa Magazine* as a community media outlet also demonstrates characteristics that differ from those of mainstream media. While mainstream media is generally oriented toward newsworthiness and the broader public interest, community media is built upon the needs, interests, and experiences of the community it represents. In the context of this study, *Palawa* is published not for commercial purposes, but as a medium that supports the social recovery process of the victims of the 1965 Tragedy by providing a space for communication, disseminating information, and documenting the experiences of survivors. These characteristics indicate that community media functions not only as a channel for information but also as an instrument that strengthens the community's collective identity and expands its members' participation in the public sphere (Carpentier et al., 2003).

The findings of this study align with the view of Denis McQuail (2010), who explains that the media serves not only as a conveyor of *information* but also as a means of *identity* formation, a space *for representation*, and a *vehicle for* social mobilization. These functions are reflected in the publication of *Palawa Magazine*, which not only conveys information about the activities of the Surakarta '65 Joint Secretariat but also presents the experiences of survivors as part of the public sphere of communication. Through these functions, the media serves as a platform enabling survivors to rebuild their self-confidence while introducing their perspectives to a public that has, until now, primarily received narratives from other sources.

The findings of this study also align with the research by Andries and Laksmono (2022), which demonstrates that civil society organizations play a crucial role in advocating for the recognition and restoration of the rights of victims of human rights violations through various forms of advocacy. However, this study offers more specific findings. While Andries and Laksmono placed greater emphasis on strengthening organizations and advocacy networks, this study demonstrates that community media can be an integral part of the advocacy strategy itself. In the context of Sekber '65 Surakarta, advocacy is realized not only through victim support

and organizational activities but also through the publication of print media that consistently presents the victims' perspectives to the public.

The findings of this study also expand upon the results of Saputro's (2024) research on the use of ketoprak performance art as an advocacy medium by Sekber '65 Surakarta. Both studies show that Sekber '65 utilizes cultural media as a means of conveying victims' experiences to the public. However, this study reveals distinct characteristics because it focuses on community print media. Unlike performances, which are temporary in nature, each issue of *Palawa* magazine can be preserved, distributed, and reread, thereby functioning as an archive that documents the victims' experiences over the long term. This documentary nature enables print media to make a more sustainable contribution to supporting advocacy practices.

Furthermore, the findings of this study reinforce those of Annie Pohlman (2013), who explains that organizations representing victims of the 1965 Tragedy play a role in documenting experiences and preserving memories of the violence endured by survivors. This study demonstrates that this documentation process is not limited to the collection of archives or testimonies but is also realized through the publication of community media. In this context, *Palawa* Magazine serves as a space that enables victims' experiences to be recorded, published, and passed on to the public as part of efforts to preserve collective memory while strengthening the sustainability of advocacy practices.

Furthermore, the findings of this study align with those of Eddyono (2024), who explains that memories of the 1965 Tragedy continue to be preserved and contested through various narrative-production practices outside the state's official history. Amid the ongoing "*regime of silence*," various civil society initiatives act as agents of memory, documenting victims' experiences and presenting alternative narratives regarding the 1965 violence. This study demonstrates that this process is not only carried out through the collection of archives or testimonies but is also realized through community media publications. In this context, *Palawa* Magazine serves as a space that enables victims' experiences to be recorded, published, and passed on to the public as part of efforts to preserve collective memory while strengthening the sustainability of advocacy practices.

The implications of this research indicate that community media plays a strategic role in supporting sustainable advocacy practices. Unlike advocacy activities that are sporadic in nature, the regular publication of community media enables the continuous dissemination of information, the documentation of victims' experiences, and the strengthening of networks among communities. Thus, community print media serves not only as a means of organizational communication but also as an instrument that ensures the sustainability of the advocacy struggle by preserving and disseminating victims' experiences to the public.

Based on these findings, this study offers the novel insight that the publication of *Palawa* Magazine emerged as a response to the need for social recovery among victims of the 1965 Tragedy, influenced by social, personal, and structural factors. Unlike previous studies, which have largely focused on civil society organizations, cultural media, or advocacy movements in general, this study demonstrates that community print media can integrate the functions of communication, representation, documentation, and advocacy into a single medium built upon the direct experiences of survivors. These findings enrich the study of community media, public history, and community-based advocacy by demonstrating that community print media can serve as a non-litigious advocacy tool that supports recognition, recovery, and the preservation of the collective memory of victims of past human rights violations.

The Role of Palawa Magazine as an Advocacy Medium for Victims of the 1965 Tragedy

The research findings indicate that *Palawa* Magazine plays a broader role than merely serving as a communication medium for the Sekber '65 Surakarta organization. Its role has evolved into one of the advocacy tools used to fight for recognition, redress, and the reduction of stigma against victims of the 1965 Tragedy. This role is realized by providing a space for victims to share their life experiences, disseminating information to the public, documenting the history of survivors, and raising public awareness about the human rights violations suffered by the victims. Through these various functions, *Palawa* Magazine has become part of the advocacy strategy carried out by Sekber '65 Surakarta to foster a more critical and humane public understanding of the 1965 Tragedy.

One of the most prominent forms of advocacy is evident in *Palawa* Magazine's efforts to feature victims' experiences as a central part of its content. Based on an interview with the Editor-in-Chief of *Palawa* Magazine, victims are no longer merely positioned as subjects narrated by others, but are given space to share their experiences, perspectives, and reflections on the 1965 Tragedy. Some articles are submitted directly by the victims, while others are obtained through interviews that are then edited by the editorial team without altering the substance of the experiences the authors wish to convey.

"Most of the articles do come from various contributors, but I handled much of the editing process myself. Many members of the Joint Secretariat actually have very valuable life experiences, but they aren't used to putting them into writing. That's why I often help them reorganize their writing, refine the language, and adapt it to the needs of the respective sections." (Interview with Mrs. Didik, May 26, 2026).

This statement illustrates that the editorial team of *Palawa* Magazine does not merely perform technical functions as manuscript editors but also plays a role in facilitating survivors who are not yet accustomed to writing, so that their experiences can be conveyed more systematically. The editing process is carried out to improve the language and structure of the writing without losing the experience or the main message the author wishes to convey. Therefore, the editorial team acts as a facilitator that bridges the victims' experiences with the readers so that the survivors' voices are conveyed authentically.

This role is further highlighted through the creation of various sections that specifically highlight the experiences of survivors. One such section is the "Profiles" section, which features the life stories of victims, activists, and figures concerned with humanitarian issues. According to Ms. Didik, the purpose of this section is not only to introduce these figures to readers but also to reveal the humanity of the victims—a side that has long been obscured by various stigmas prevalent in society. "Often, the profiles of victims published in the magazine show that they are not the people who have been negatively portrayed by the stigmas prevalent in society. Through their life stories, readers can see a human side that has rarely been shown before" (Interview with Ms. Didik, May 26, 2026).

These findings indicate that *Palawa* Magazine not only serves to disseminate information but also functions as a space for representation for groups that have long been marginalized. Providing a space for survivors to share their life experiences enables the creation of alternative narratives sourced directly from them. This aligns with the research by de-Lima-Santos and Mesquita (2021), which shows that alternative media can provide a space for marginalized communities to produce and disseminate information based on their own experiences, thereby presenting perspectives that have long been underrepresented in mainstream media.

In addition to serving as a space for representation, *Palawa* Magazine also fulfills a communicative function that strengthens relationships among survivors while expanding the

dissemination of information to the public. Based on the research findings, the target audience of *Palawa Magazine* includes not only members of the '65 Surakarta Joint Secretariat but also victims in various regions, schools, government agencies, civil society organizations, and various networks concerned with human rights issues. This distribution pattern indicates that *Palawa Magazine* was designed from the outset as a community media outlet that bridges communication between victims and the broader public. "Because the number of magazines is limited, one magazine is read in turns. After one of the elders or members finishes reading it, the magazine is passed on to another member so they can take their turn reading it" (Interview with Mrs. Didik, May 26, 2026).

Readers' responses to *Palawa Magazine* also demonstrate that this medium serves a strong communicative function. Mrs. Didik explained that the survivors showed a very high level of enthusiasm for reading, despite the limited number of copies available. This situation encouraged the survivors to form small groups to take turns reading and discussing the magazine's content. This practice demonstrates that *Palawa Magazine* is not only a medium read individually but also creates a space for dialogue among survivors regarding their experiences, struggles, and developments in issues related to their rights. This collective reading process demonstrates that community media can strengthen participation, communication, and solidarity among communities, in line with the findings of Haywood et al. (2021) regarding the role of community media in building collective community resilience. On the other hand, the general public has also responded positively to the magazine's existence; in fact, some readers have provided moral support and financial assistance to ensure the magazine's continued publication.

In addition to serving as a communication medium, *Palawa Magazine* also functions as a public education medium. Based on interview results, each theme featured in the magazine is determined through editorial meetings, taking into account social momentum and emerging issues, such as Human Rights Day, Kartini Day, or other humanitarian themes. This strategy demonstrates that *Palawa Magazine* not only conveys information about the organization but also seeks to connect victims' experiences with relevant issues in society, enabling readers to understand the 1965 Tragedy within a broader context.

The selection of themes based on social momentum shows that *Palawa Magazine* utilizes the media as a tool for public education. The victims' experiences are placed within the context of human rights, equality, and justice, enabling the public to gain a broader understanding of the 1965 Tragedy. This practice aligns with Atkinson (2023), who explains that alternative media serve as a space for public discussion on issues that receive insufficient attention in mainstream media, thereby enabling a greater diversity of perspectives and narratives.

This educational function is further strengthened by the diversity of sections featured in *Palawa Magazine*. In addition to publishing articles on history and human rights, the magazine also features the "Youth Forum" (FGM) section, which provides a platform for students, children of victims, and other young people to share their views on humanity and the 1965 Tragedy. According to Ms. Didik, this section was created as an effort to ensure the continuity of the struggle so that understanding of history does not end with the generation of victims but is passed on to the next generation. Thus, the advocacy carried out by *Palawa Magazine* is not only oriented toward victims but is also aimed at building historical awareness among the public, particularly the younger generation.

These findings indicate that the Young Generation Forum (FGM) section serves not only as a publication platform for the younger generation but also as a means of renewing advocacy through the intergenerational transmission of memory. The involvement of students, children of victims, and young people in this section demonstrates efforts to ensure the continuity of the

struggle of the victims of the 1965 Tragedy through intergenerational dialogue and learning. This practice aligns with research by Cooke et al. (2023), which shows that the involvement of the younger generation in participatory media and intergenerational dialogue regarding the history of conflict can strengthen critical understanding, foster the formation of collective memory, and support the sustainability of reconciliation and advocacy processes in post-conflict societies.

The involvement of the Youth Generation Forum demonstrates that the advocacy carried out by Sekber '65 does not stop with the generation of victims but is also directed toward the process of passing on historical knowledge to the next generation. In media and memory studies, this process of transmission is viewed as a mechanism for intergenerational memory transfer that allows the experiences of affected groups to continue to be studied and discussed by subsequent generations. Thus, the FGM section serves not only as a space for youth participation but also as part of the continuity of advocacy practices.

Another equally important role is the function of historical documentation. Based on research findings, various experiences of victims that had previously gone unrecorded in official history are documented through sections such as "Profiles" and "Memories." Through these sections, the life experiences of survivors, their journeys of struggle, and the contributions of Sekber '65 figures are recorded in written form so they can be revisited by the public and future generations. According to Mrs. Didik, this documentation process was undertaken because many of the victims' experiences risk being lost if not promptly recorded and published. This practice demonstrates that media not only serves to disseminate information but also functions as a space that shapes and preserves a group's collective memory through the processes of documenting and sharing past experiences (Neiger, 2020).

This documentary role demonstrates that Palawa Magazine not only preserves the victims' experiences as an organizational archive but also builds collective memory regarding the 1965 Tragedy through narratives originating from the survivors themselves. In media studies, this process is understood as the media's function in shaping collective memory—that is, when the media serves as a space that records, organizes, and transmits past experiences to the public and future generations (Neiger, 2020). Therefore, the existence of sections such as "Profile" and "Memories" is not merely internal organizational documentation but also part of an effort to preserve social memory regarding the experiences of the victims of the 1965 Tragedy.

This documentation is of great significance because the majority of the experiences of the victims of the 1965 Tragedy are not recorded in official historiography. Through its periodic publications, Palawa Magazine builds a community archive that documents the life experiences, struggles, and organizational dynamics of the victims over time. This archive is not only beneficial to the survivor community but also serves as a historical source that can be utilized by researchers and the public in the future.

These findings demonstrate that the functions carried out by Palawa Magazine are not isolated but are interconnected in supporting advocacy efforts for the victims of the 1965 Tragedy. The space for representation allows victims to share their life experiences; the communication function strengthens solidarity among communities; the educational function fosters public understanding; and the documentation function ensures the continuity of collective memory. All of these functions complement one another, making Palawa Magazine a community media outlet that not only conveys information but also plays an active role in the process of empowerment and social recovery for the victims.

The findings of this study align with the ideas of Denis McQuail (2010), who explains that the media serves as a conveyor of information, a space for representation, a shaper of social

identity, and a means of social mobilization. In the context of this study, these functions do not exist in isolation but are interrelated in shaping the advocacy practices carried out through *Palawa* Magazine. On the other hand, these findings also reinforce Annie Pohlman's (2013) research on the importance of documenting victims' experiences as part of the formation of collective memory, while expanding upon the findings of Andries and Laksmono (2022) by demonstrating that community media can be an integral part of civil society organizations' advocacy strategies. Thus, the novelty of this study lies in the finding that *Palawa* Magazine not only functions as the organization's internal media but is also capable of integrating the functions of representation, communication, education, documentation, and advocacy into a single community media platform built upon the firsthand experiences of survivors of the 1965 Tragedy.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the publication of *Palawa* Magazine by the 1965 Joint Secretariat (Sekber '65) in Surakarta was driven by the need to provide a space for communication among survivors of the 1965 Tragedy, who for years have faced stigma, discrimination, and social isolation. Supported by the journalistic background of its founders, backing from the Peduli Program, and consideration for the circumstances of the victims—most of whom are elderly and have limited access to digital media—*Palawa* was chosen as a community print publication that is easily accessible to survivors. The research findings indicate that from the outset, *Palawa* was designed not merely as an organizational publication but as an advocacy platform that integrates the functions of representation, communication, education, and documentation. Through its various sections, the magazine provides a space for survivors to share their life experiences, strengthen solidarity among survivors, disseminate information to the public, foster a more critical public understanding of the 1965 Tragedy, and document survivors' experiences as part of the collective memory.

These findings demonstrate that community print media can serve as a non-litigious advocacy tool that contributes to efforts to restore victims' dignity and reduce stigma through the dissemination of knowledge rooted in the victims' own experiences. The novelty of this research lies in the assertion that community media not only functions as a means of organizational communication but also as an advocacy strategy that connects victim representation, public education, and the preservation of historical memory within a single medium managed by the survivor community. Therefore, the development and preservation of similar community media require support from civil society organizations, academics, and the government as part of efforts to strengthen historical documentation and human rights education. Future research is recommended to examine the impact of community media on readers' perceptions, compare similar practices among victims' organizations in other regions, and explore the transformation of community media to digital platforms in support of advocacy for victims of past human rights violations.

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